

## Empathy

Empathy is a quality of presence to another person,  
and the capacity to feel what the other person is experiencing,  
in particular his/her suffering.

Empathy is a quality of listening,  
free of all prejudgments – as if seeing the person for the very first time;  
attentive to what is happening here and now, even if the person brings up the past.

It is listening to the desires/longings/needs,  
that are trying to be expressed behind what the person is saying;  
that, even when expressed in a hurtful manner, are welcomed as a gift,

without analysing the person, without wanting to establish a diagnosis,  
without wanting to understand intellectually, nor classify,  
without wanting to find a solution,  
nor console, give relief, reassure,  
nor correct,  
nor give advice (unless the person asks for it, or accepts it),

being confident in the resources that the person possesses  
and those that she/he will be able to resort to,  
thanks to the confidence that I have in the divine energy of love which, mysteriously,  
is in the process of connecting us, and reconnecting us, one to the other, and each to  
him/her self.

Empathy sees the beauty of the person.

Empathy believes that the person does what he/she does in order to care for precious  
needs.

It believes that these needs are equal to my own, neither inferior nor superior.

Empathy is not approval of what the other does,  
it allows profound disagreement with the strategies, sometimes tragic, that have  
been undertaken to satisfy the needs.

To have empathy for ourselves enables us to have empathy for others.

*This definition of empathy brings together different elements formulated by  
Marshall Rosenberg, founder of Non-Violent Communication (NVC).*